



County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services  
**APPLICANT'S GUIDE TO AN  
ADMINISTRATIVE PERMIT FOR A  
METEOROLOGICAL TESTING (MET)  
FACILITY**  
**ZONING DIVISION**

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These guidelines provide information on how to apply for an [Administrative Permit for a Meteorological Testing Facility](#). Review the attached Zoning Ordinance excerpts to determine where and under what restrictions this use is allowed. Please be sure to read ALL of the information in this Guide and application package forms.

OPTIONAL: Contact Planning & Development Services (PDS) to set-up an [Initial Consultation Meeting](#) to determine the processing requirements and to discuss project specifics with various departments prior to formally submitting an application. To schedule an Initial Consultation Meeting, contact the Planning & Development Services Zoning Information Counter at (858) 565-5981. Note: There is a fee for an Initial Consultation Meeting.

## **FILING REQUIREMENTS**

Complete the following [PDS forms](#):

- |    |   |                           |
|----|---|---------------------------|
| 1. | Discretionary Permit Application            | PDS-346                   |
| 2. | Supplemental Application                    | PDS-346S <sup>1</sup>     |
| 3. | Ownership Disclosure                        | PDS-305                   |
| 4. | Evidence of Legal Parcel                    | PDS-320                   |
| 5. | Plan Check Pre-App Notice                   | PDS-581                   |
| 6. | Complete Public Notice Package              | PDS-514, 515, 516 and 524 |
| 7. | Acknowledgement of Filing Fees and Deposits | PDS-126                   |

Include also:

8. See [coversheet](#) for required number of plot plans. See PDS-090 – Typical Plot Plan. The plan MUST be drawn to Engineer's scale. Plot plan enlargements or reductions will not be accepted.
9. Eight sets of elevation drawings or copies of manufactures specifications.
10. Application fee. See fee schedule for amount on form PDS-369.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The plot plans and elevations must be folded no larger than 8 1/2" x 11" with the lower right hand corner exposed.**

<sup>1</sup>This form will be "speaking" for you, so it is very important that your project is described in complete detail. For example specify the use, square footage, height, etc. of the proposed and existing structures.



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**EXCERPTS FROM THE ZONING ORDINANCE**  
**METEOROLOGICAL TESTING (MET) FACILITY**

**Section 1110:**

Meteorological Testing (MET) Facility: A tower with or without guy wires and any other equipment with a component, such as an anemometer or sodar device, to measure meteorological phenomena, such as wind speed, wind direction, air pressure, rain, snow or sun exposure. A MET Facility shall not include a Wind Turbine.

Wind Turbine: A device which converts the kinetic energy of the wind into a useable form of electrical energy. A Wind Turbine is not a Meteorological Testing (MET) Facility.

**Section 4620:**

**4620 PERMITTED EXCEPTIONS TO HEIGHT LIMITS.**

The following structures shall be exempt from the maximum height provisions of an applicable height designator:

- k. Meteorological Testing (MET) Facility of less than 200 feet in height permitted in accordance with Section 6123.

**Section 6123: AD Process and Required Findings**

Before an Administrative Permit is approved to allow a MET Facility, the following findings must be made, supported by facts and evidence, as required by Zoning Ordinance Section 6123. If not provided in the project application, PDS may ask for additional information to provide the required facts and evidence.

**6123 METEOROLOGICAL TESTING FACILITY**

The temporary use of a Meteorological Testing (MET) Facility is permitted if the following requirements are met:

- a. An Administrative Permit must be obtained in accordance with the Administrative Permit Procedure commencing at Section 7050. The following findings must be made prior to approval of an Administrative Permit:
  - 1. That the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use will be compatible with adjacent uses, residents, buildings, or structures, with consideration given to:
    - i. Harmony in scale, bulk, coverage and density;
    - ii. The availability of public facilities, services and utilities;
    - iii. The harmful effect, if any, upon desirable neighborhood character;
    - iv. The generation of traffic and the capacity and physical character of surrounding streets;



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- v. The suitability of the site for the type and intensity of use or development which is proposed; and to
    - vi. Any other relevant impact of the proposed use; and
  - 2. That the impacts, as described in paragraph "a.1." of this section, and the location of the proposed use will be consistent with the San Diego County General Plan; and
  - 3. That the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been complied with; and
  - 4. That the applicant has provided the County with an owner consent letter demonstrating to the satisfaction of the Director that the operator of the MET Facility is authorized to use the property for a MET Facility, unless the operator owns the land upon which the MET Facility will be located.
- b. Location. A MET Facility is prohibited on property subject to the S81 Use Regulations.
- c. Notification. Notice shall be provided pursuant to Section 7060.c.
- d. Setback. The MET Facility shall be set back from property lines and roads the height of the tower or other tallest piece of equipment extended above the ground. The MET Facility shall meet the applicable setback requirements of the zone. The setback requirements of the zone shall apply to all components of the MET Facility including, but not limited to, a tower, guy wires, guy wire anchors and any other necessary equipment.
- e. Minimum Spacing. The MET Facility shall be spaced at least 500 feet apart from any other MET Facility.
- f. Area of Disturbance. The MET Facility shall not disturb an area more than is necessary for the base of a tower, the guy wire anchors, other authorized equipment for the Facility and/or an access road. The equipment may include sonar equipment. It is preferred that the Facility be located as close as possible to an existing access road. The area of disturbance shall be clearly shown on the plans.
- g. Size. The MET Facility is allowed one temporary structure other than a tower or a sonar equipment trailer. The temporary structure is limited to a size of 120 square feet and may be used for storage of equipment for the MET Facility.
- h. Illumination. There shall be no outdoor light emissions associated with a MET Facility except as required by the Director, the Federal Aviation Administration or other government agency.
- i. Height. The MET Facility shall be less than 200 feet in height.
- j. Duration. The period of operation of the MET Facility shall not exceed three years from the date of approval of the Administrative Permit unless the Director grants an extension. The MET Facility shall be removed within 30 days of the expiration date of the permit. The Director may grant an extension of time upon the applicant submitting written justification for the continued use of the facility and filing for a modification pursuant to Section 7072. A time extension is no longer needed if the MET Facility is approved by a Use Permit. Once the MET Facility is a part of an approved Use Permit it is no longer considered a Temporary Use.



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- k. Security. The operator shall provide a security in the form and amount determined by the Director to ensure removal of the MET Facility. The security shall be provided to PDS prior to building permit issuance. Once the MET Facility has been removed from the property pursuant to a demolition permit to the satisfaction of the Director, the security may be released to the operator of the MET Facility.

It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare a complete public notice package for the purpose of notifying nearby property owners that an application has been filed. The notice package must include all property within 300 feet of the exterior boundaries of the proposed MET **and** a minimum of 20 different property owners. In order to include 20 different property owners it will often be necessary to extend the notice well beyond 300 feet. The complete public notice procedure is explained in form PDS-516, Applicant's Guide – Preparation of Public Notice Package, included in the application package. Also refer to PDS-515 and complete and submit PDS-514 and 524.

**Section 7060 d:**

d. PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing shall not be held unless the administering agency determines that such hearing would be in the best interest of the County or if required by applicable sections of the Zoning Ordinance where a hearing is requested by the applicant or other affected person.

If the County, the applicant or any other affected party requests a hearing, a decision on the application will be made by the Zoning Administrator at a public hearing. If no hearing is requested, a decision on the application will be made by the Director of Planning & Development Services. These decisions may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

## **MISC. INFORMATION**

**Assembly Bill AB 511:**

AB 511 was approved by the Governor on August 27, 2012. AB 511 requires that until January 1, 2018 that all MET towers located on prime agricultural lands or within one mile of prime agricultural lands to be marked for aeronautical safety as described within AB 511. Applicants submitting an Administrative Permit for a MET must comply with this State requirement when siting and designing a MET that is on or within one mile of prime agricultural lands.

**Environmental Review:**

The deposit collected for the environmental review portion of the application covers review of an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). If, after the initial review by PDS staff, any environmental issues are identified or additional study is needed, the applicant will need to complete additional forms and an additional deposit will need to be made.

**Building Permit:**

Building Permits will be required for any MET over 35 feet in height to insure that buildings meet the current Uniform Building Code. Applicants should contact the PDS Building Division at (858) 565-5920 or toll-free at (888) 336-7553 for Code standards and requirements.



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**Stormwater Regulations**

MET applicants do not have to prepare a Stormwater Protection Plan as part of the Administrative Permit process, but please be aware that operation of a MET must comply with all applicable stormwater regulations at all times. In addition, building permit plans must demonstrate how stormwater regulations will be met. The activities at a MET are subject to enforcement under permits from the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance (Ordinance No. 9926) and all other applicable ordinances and standards. This includes requirements for Low Impact Development (LID) <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/dplu/docs/LID-Handbook.pdf> materials and wastes control, erosion control, and sediment control on the project site. Projects that involve areas greater than one acre require that the property owner keep additional and updated information on-site concerning stormwater runoff.